

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 097664

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, PARM, PFOR, KU, US

SUBJECT: KUWAIT NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAM

REFS: (A) KUWAIT 1778; (B) VIENNA 3200; (C) KUWAIT 1552;

(D) KUWAIT 1499; (E) STATE 182094 OF AUGUST 20, 1974;

(F) STATE 157699 OF JULY 20, 1974

1. WE ARE REVIEWING AGAIN OUR POSITION REGARDING POSSIBLE COOPERATION WITH GOK IN FIELD OF NUCLEAR ELECTRIC POWER PRODUCTION BUT HAVE UP TO NOW FOUND NO CONVINCING ARGUMENTS TO CHANGE OUR POSITION OUTLINED IN REFS (E) AND (F).

2. IN EXAMINING DESIRABILITY ENTERING INTO NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM WITH KUWAIT, THERE ARE TWO IMPORTANT FACTORS AFFECTING US ATTITUDE:

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(A) FIRST IS THAT KUWAIT HAS NOT RATIFIED NPT. CONGRESS

AND AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION, AS MOST RECENTLY REFLECTED AT FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION MEETING IN DEPARTMENT THIS MONTH, CONTINUE TO EXPRESS STRONG RESERVATIONS ABOUT SALE OF NUCLEAR POWER REACTORS AND TECHNOLOGY TO COUNTRIES THAT DO NOT ADHERE TO NPT. FYI: UNDER RECENT AMENDMENT TO ATOMIC ENERGY ACT, ANY PROPOSED AGREEMENT FOR NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH ANOTHER COUNTRY MUST BE SUBMITTED TO

CONGRESS FOR 60 DAY REVIEW DURING WHICH CONGRESS, IF IT DESIRES, MAY ADOPT CONCURRENT RESOLUTION IN EFFECT VETOING AGREEMENT. END FYI.

(B) IT IS DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY WHAT SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL BENEFITS MIGHT ACCRUE WERE WE TO COOPERATE WITH KUWAITIS AT THIS STAGE ON NUCLEAR POWER. UNLESS OVERRIDING US NATIONAL INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED, WE CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT GIVEN PRESENT LIMITED QUANTITIES OF NUCLEAR FUEL, PRIORITY HAS TO GO TO COUNTRIES WHICH ARE (1) ENERGY SHORT; AND/OR (2) WHOSE ECONOMIES CAN ABSORB LARGE QUANTITIES OF POWER.

3. ASSUMING GOK HAS NOT MADE CAREFUL ASSESSMENT OF APPLICABILITY OF NUCLEAR POWER, EMBASSY MAY IN MEANTIME WANT TO SUGGEST TO GOK THAT IT APPROACH IAEA TO UNDERTAKE A POWER STUDY TO DETERMINE FEASIBILITY OF NUCLEAR POWER IN KUWAIT AND, IF FEASIBLE, TO DETERMINE SCALE OF NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM, AND RELATION TO DUAL PURPOSE FACILITIES E.G. DESALTING. US WOULD PROBABLY BE INVOLVED IN CONDUCT OF SUCH A STUDY. KISSINGER

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